

INFORMATION REPORT

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1. A diving unit of the Soviet Navy is located in the installations of the former seaplane base in the area of the former South Harbor near Eichstaden in Swinemuende. *
2. The designation of the diving unit by the Russians was Vodolas meaning diver. German workers employed by the Soviet Navy in Swinemuende referred to the unit as the Diving Division. Petty officers and lower ratings of the unit wore a red diver's helmet as an insignia on their left upper arm. The unit was under the command of a senior commander.
3. The personnel of the diving unit was estimated at between 300 and 400 in May 1951. The unit trained young sailors as divers. Trained divers were employed on salvage operations on ships sunk in the Swinemuende area. The diving unit raised the Berlin and Cordillera. Before raising the Berlin, the unit had been reinforced, and a total of 72 divers worked on the salvage of this ship.
4. The young divers descended for training to a maximum depth of 10 meters in the Swine River and a depth of 15 to 20 meters at sea. The training staff were personnel who had served for seven or eight years as divers with the Baltic Fleet. The trainees were preponderantly between 18 and 20 years old.
5. In May 1951, the diving unit had six seaworthy diving tenders, including the former German vessels Kormoran and Sperber. The unit also had 10 to 15 pontoons each with a lifting capacity of 300 tons. The Russians believed that the diving suits were of the newest type; each diving suit was fitted with a throat-type microphone. The unit had some underwater welding apparatuses. The vessels and pontoons of the unit were berthed at the South Harbor. **

* Comment. Previous information several times indicated that a Soviet salvage unit with a diving school of the Baltic Fleet was stationed on the premises of the former German seaplane base in the harbor basin of the Pommernwerft shipyard. Another source reported the officers and other ratings of the salvage unit were billeted in some buildings indicated on the German sea chart D 1300 at 53°51'03"N/14°11'48"E.

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** Comment. Another source reported that, in 1951, the diving unit had four diving tenders which allegedly were former German sea-air rescue vessels. The same source reported that several small vessels, including some German landing craft, were raised in the harbor basin of Orinemuende in 1951.

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